



THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

FRED LEAF
Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
313 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 240-8101

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April 25, 2005

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

**SUBJECT: KING/DREW MEDICAL CENTER (KDMC) EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN
CONTRACTS**

This is to provide you with responses to the questions regarding the above subject that you raised at your Board meeting of April 19, 2005.

Question #1. Why did the three previous emergency physicians leave? Was it related to competence? Poor medical practice? Did they move out of the state? Did they retire?

Response: Eight emergency physicians have left KDMC during the last year due to the following reasons:

1. Termination of contract for failure to comply with current policies (one physician).
2. Family illness and/or personal reasons (three physicians).
3. Employment change to the private sector (one physician).
4. Retirement (one physician).
5. Relocation to other cities (two physicians).

In addition, one physician has given notice that he plans to leave in July, 2005 to pursue fellowship training.

Question #2. What type of orientation will these physicians be given to make sure they understand the protocols and roles and responsibilities of the emergency room?

Response: All new emergency physicians are given written departmental policies that are explained in a private meeting with the Emergency Department Chair and Vice-Chair. New members are also given Professional Staff Association (PSA) Bylaws and Rules and Regulations. All new staff are proctored if necessary as part of the credentialing and privileging process. Ongoing monitoring of staff for conformance with policies and procedures is part of routine ER oversight and management.

Question #3. Was there an assessment of workload or coverage need before submitting these new contracts to make sure the additional physicians are needed?

Response: The hospital Medical Director and his staff did an analysis on staffing in the Emergency Department (ED) earlier in the year using comparisons with Harbor/UCLA. They also reviewed the workload and the Resident Review Committee (RRC) requirements for attending staff given the number of residents. The hospital Medical Director has determined that fourteen physicians are needed to adequately handle the current workload and RRC requirements. With these three physicians KDMC will have fourteen ED attendings. During the month of March, 2005, there were a total of 3,820 patients seen in the main Emergency Department and Urgent Care.

Question #4. Is the workload of these three new physicians comparable to that of the previous three physicians?

Response: The workload will be the same. The shifts in the Emergency Department are distributed equally among the physicians.

Question #5. What is the comparison of the workload of the contract physicians versus County-employed physicians?

Response: The workload for contract and County-employed physicians is the same.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

TLG:al

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors